**DISCUSSION TOPIC FOR MAY 4 STORMWATER STRATEGY MEETING**

*This document is intended to give you a feel for the discussion we will be having so you can start thinking about it ahead of time. It is just a starting place for the discussion – I expect you will all have thoughts to add to expand upon this.*

**What question are we trying to answer?**

What is our overall strategy for determining whether stormwater loading will result in recontamination of Portland Harbor sediments?

**Why are we asking the question?**

We need to answer this question before we can have a purposeful discussion about how much/what kind of data to collect.

**What are we up against?**

Technical issues:

- Relationship between stormwater loading and in-river sediment concentration, etc. is complex and there is limited experience to draw upon, especially for PCBs
- We don't have info/decisions yet on a number of factors that will ultimately influence the outcome, such as scale (spatial and temporal), risk drivers, remedial objectives, etc.
- We don't have an estimate of the magnitude of stormwater as a source relative to other sources of contaminants in the harbor.
- Others?

Practical issues:

- Characterization of loading was not something not included in JSCS, except as a tool for making WOE decisions on medium priority sites, so we haven't been asking RPs to collect that data.
- Even if we had characterization data, we don't have guidelines for how we'd use that data to make a decision about a specific site.
- Data collection is costly; it's difficult to ask RPs for additional data collection if we can't clearly explain how this info will be used to make decisions.
- In the future, if we decide to establish a PH stormwater permit or other regulatory approach, we will need to defend any requirements we put upon RPs for stormwater control. The more stringent/costly the requirements, the more robust our defense must be.
- Once we enter the "rabbit hole" of evaluating recontamination potential in a quantitative manner, it's hard to get out - there's always more data that could be had, arguments about the methodology, debates about the acceptable level of uncertainty, quibbling about the equity of the solution, etc. It's easy to get sucked in and expend a lot of energy and resources that might otherwise be spent on actual source control.
- The inability to issue a NFA for the stormwater pathway at sites is hampering property transactions
- Others?

**So, given all this, how should we approach the question du jour?**

1. Clearly define our objectives

For example:

- Land upon an approach that EPA and stakeholders can support
- Make decisions about data collection needs asap so we don't miss opportunities or require unnecessary data collection
- Approach needs to reflect the reality of the time and costs involved in data collection

2. Identify the range of potential strategies, and the pros and cons

To get the conversation started, here's one way of looking at the range of options:

*One end of the spectrum: Quantitative Approach* (develop a methodology to relate stormwater loading to recontamination potential; collect necessary data)

- need to make a number of decisions (e.g., scale, acceptable level of uncertainty, etc.) before we could design our data collection plan

| PROS | CONS |
|---|---|
| More defensible outcome | Rabbit hole issue |
| ?? | ?? |
| ?? | ?? |

*Other end of the spectrum: Adaptive Management Approach* (direct our energy toward aggressive source control efforts, rather than detailed data collection and analysis, and implement a follow-up study to evaluate effectiveness)

- this applies to medium and low priority sites; high priority sites would be addressed as per the JSCS

| PROS | CONS |
|---|---|
| Most likely means we get more source control measures implemented sooner | Will this approach "stand up"? |
| ?? | ?? |
| ?? | ?? |

3. Decide upon a strategy (*this is the "easier said than done" part)*

Considerations:

- Are there any "simplifying assumptions" we employ to help us make a decision?
- Is there additional information we need in order to make a decision?